

Games I like to play



By NEYSA ACADEIN

Foreword

ALMOST without exception, every time I attend a dinner there is usually a little group somewhere in the offing exclaiming, "For Heaven's sake, don't let Neysa get started on any of her games."

However, nothing daunted by such opposition, I can usually, by dint of a little skirmishing around, find a few kindred souls. So we settle ourselves, decide upon a game, and are happy and noisy till our hostess throws us out.

Charlie Chaplin is one of the most enthusiastic game players I know, with Kathleen Norris, Noel Coward, and Mary Pickford running a close second. Alexander Woolcott ought to be included in this group too, but he is always changing the rules to make them more difficult.

I have invented four games: Murder, Market Place, Books and Sex Appeal. The Murder Game was a result of the Snyder-Gray trial which I covered with Fanny Hurst, and it was suggested by witnesses for the defense who seemed to remember details so accurately. This particular game is a test of observation and accuracy and proves conclusively that the average person remembers only about half of what goes on around him.

I think the Psychology Game is perhaps the most interesting of all. It was invented by Noel Coward, and the problem is to guess under what circumstances you would be tempted to cheat, steal, or kill and how truthful you are.

Are You Listening is a trick, pure and simple, and I'm foolish to give it away.

I hope you have as much fun with these games as I have. I think you will, for I've come to the conclusion that I'm not alone in the fact that I love to play games.

ALAEIN

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DID you ever have exactly three times as many people drop in to an informal party as you had planned on? Well, I have, and that's how I discovered the possibilities of this particular game. It can be played by any number of people, and the requirements are simple and obtainable anywhere—a pencil and two sheets of paper for every person.

Two people are selected and sent out of the room. Then the remaining guests put their minds on inventing two ridiculous sentences. For instance, "I never go motoring without my ear muffs," or, "I once knew a man who had a pet whale." The sillier, the better. Everyone in the room takes a hand in creating the sentences, and as soon as they are decided upon, each sentence, written on a separate piece of paper, is folded up and the two players are called back. One of the folded papers is given to each player and he is instructed not to let the other person know what is written there. Then they are seated in chairs, facing each other, ready to go.

"Now," says the person who is running the show, "each of you two has been given a sentence and the idea of the game is to see which of you can introduce your sentence into a general conversation with each other without being challenged. You met at the zoo."

So they start to talk on any subject. Of course, they must not try to introduce their sentences at once, or they are in danger of being challenged. It's best to wait two or three minutes and be positive that you are introducing it in a perfectly natural fashion. When a player succeeds in getting his sentence in without being challenged by the others, he wins the game. If the opposing player suspects a sentence, he says, "I challenge," and if it is the key sentence, he wins.

The first time I ever played the game, Kathleen Norris and Noel Coward were the two players selected. The sentence given to Mrs. Norris was, "I'm awfully worried now that my gums have started to recede." Mr. Coward had to struggle with, "I shall never forget that day on the iceberg when I shared my lunch with a polar bear." Their meeting place was in an aeroplane.

Mr. Coward: "How do you happen to be flying?"

Mrs. Norris: "Oh, my health has been very bad lately."

Mr. Coward: "Well, I'm going back for a little visit with some Eskimos I know."

Mrs. Norris: "I wouldn't dare take such a long trip, I have to stay near my dentist."

Mr. Coward: "Is that so? Well, watch your diet, for in the far north we take long trips, even to climbing icebergs."

Mrs. Norris: "Not me, I've had my teeth aching so much lately I don't dare catch cold. . . ."

At this particular party, Mrs. Norris won!

I served a buffet supper that night. It's a grand way to feed a large number. Supper included:

CREAMED CHICKEN IN PATTY SHELLS	
COLD TONGUE	STUFFED EGGS
OLIVES	CELERY
SARATOGA CHIPS	CURRENT JELLY
CHEESE AND PIMIENTO SANDWICHES	
HOT ROLLS	
ICE CREAM WITH FUDGE SAUCE	ANGEL CAKE
COFFEE	
CANDY	SALTED NUTS

Sentence Game



Pinchey Winchey

SHOULD have known better than to try to give a party on Long Island! For every time there is a thunder-storm out there, the lights go out immediately. Sometimes they come on again in a minute or so; sometimes they just get discouraged and stay out.

At any rate, I was having a party one summer night a year or so ago, after a particularly violent electrical to-do, and suddenly, as usual, our party was left in the dark. Bridge and backgammon were abandoned, of course, and a few candles were produced. It must have been the flickering light that made someone suggest "ghost stories," but Harpo Marx vetoed that with the news of a new game called "Pinchey Winchey."

On general principles I distrust all of Harpo's games, and with good cause too, but everyone else wanted to try it, so we were told to sit on the floor in a close circle, and our instructions were to do everything that Harpo did. I was seated on his right.

Everybody got in place. The storm raged outside, and the candles flickered. Harpo leaned over, patted my cheek and said, "Pinchey Winchey." I patted the cheek of the man next to me, and so on around the circle. Then, with Harpo again leading off, he ran his finger down my nose, again repeating, "Pinchey Winchey," and again it went around the circle.

When the third round was over, I just flatly said I couldn't see what everybody was laughing at. It seemed pretty silly to me, whereupon they just laughed louder. They all insisted that we go on. On we went for six rounds, with Harpo leading off each time with a pass at my face, and the magic words "Pinchey Winchey."

The lights went on just as I had gotten completely baffled as to the evident enjoyment of the rest of the crowd. Somebody suggested just then that we go over to a neighbor's party, so off we went—me in my best white chiffon dress—and it wasn't till we arrived at a large party that I discovered that my face was black. Just one of Harpo's spur-of-the-moment games. He had slipped out into the kitchen and burned some cork, which he had in his pocket, so every time he touched my face I got a black mark. It was lots of fun—for everybody else.

Harpo was so charmed with it that he couldn't resist playing it the following week-end at another dinner. This time the victim was Sam Harris, the producer. Everybody at the dinner party went to the theatre, and it wasn't until Mr. Harris was undressing for bed that he happened to glance in the mirror.

It's a great little game, especially for the victim!

When we got back to my house, late and tired of course, everybody was hungry; so we foraged in the kitchen and had a "snack" before the party finally broke up. The ice box was generous and yielded up:

MAKE-YOUR-OWN SANDWICHES

SUPPLIES: WHITE AND BROWN BREAD, BUTTER, MAYONNAISE, HALF A DOZEN FILLINGS, ELECTRIC TOASTER.
PICKLE RELISH MIXED SALAD BOWL, FRENCH DRESSING

COFFEE

COCOA



Psychology

THERE were only a few of us sitting around the fire one winter afternoon late, when the sun was going down and we were just in the mood for coffee and confidences. It was at Katherine Cornell's isolated little house in the country. Noel Coward and I were enjoying a snack of coffee and sandwiches, and a good deal of conversation as well. We got to discussing ourselves and other people, folks in general, and folks in particular. Somebody wondered whether or not we really were telling the truth most of the time, and how we should go about it to find out how brave or self-reliant a friend might be. We arrived at a discussion of courage. Noel put it concretely.

"Kit," he asked, "are there any circumstances under which you would steal?"

Without hesitation she replied that of course she would if she had to for a starving child or a sick husband.

Voilà! Right there the psychology game was born. I've played it many times, and it's tremendously interesting and simple to arrange. Two players are selected. A is given a slip of paper and a pencil. B has a piece of paper on which a number of questions is written. B asks A the first question. For instance:

"Supposing you were walking along the street and a very well-dressed man ahead of you dropped a wallet. Your rent is overdue, and you, or your husband, is out of work. Would you return the wallet?"

As soon as B asks the question, A writes down (so no one can see), "Yes" or "No." Then B asks each one in turn what he thinks A has written down, keeping a list of the answers. At the end he asks A what he wrote. Those who guessed correctly what he answered receive a point. Go the rounds letting everyone have a chance, then check to see who is the best judge of the truthfulness of the others.

Here are some of the questions that were asked one night by one of the leading psychologists in New York:

1. Suppose you were in a bridge game and knew your opponents were cheating. They were friends of yours. Would you expose them?

2. You were in a canoe with one of your best friends and you tipped over. There was only one life preserver. Neither of you could swim. Would you take the life preserver?

3. A friend of yours whom you liked very much came to you and told you he had robbed a bank. Would you help him get away?

4. You are very poor and you are offered \$500 to take a package of opium through the customs. Would you do it?

5. A burglar is caught in your house. He tells you that he is part of a gang and in case he is caught by the police, and you identify him, his gang will kill you. Later on you are asked by the police to identify him. Would you?

6. A friend of yours commits a very great crime and you are accused of it. Since most of the evidence is circumstantial, you might possibly be sentenced to two or three years in prison—with, of course, the disgrace of the trial. If your friend is caught he will be put to death. Would you let yourself be tried?

7. Two or three people in your community contract leprosy and are taken away forever. One morning you

see a white spot on your body that means you may have it. Would you go to the doctor to find out, or would you try to conceal it indefinitely? Leprosy is very contagious. The question is, "Would you go to a doctor?"

8. If a burglar came in a room and you had a loaded revolver, would you shoot to kill?

9. You are on your honeymoon. The ship on which you are traveling catches fire. You have secured life preservers for yourself and your wife, who is totally dependent upon you. A very old man has none. Would you give him yours?

10. You are in love with someone, who by birth and breeding is not in your social class. Would you attempt to introduce her to your friends, and bring about a social relationship?

This game may start off pretty hilariously, but it is so closely tied up with human problems and emotions that it is very apt to get serious as you go along, and you will find that after each question there will be discussion pro and con.

You will need some questions to start the game going, but once into it—more problems will present themselves than you will have time for. The whole relationships of home, marriage, children and business ethics will come in for consideration, and will prove themselves marvelous ground for material.

Although these questions were propounded by an eminent psychologist, you need not think that everybody won't have a contribution. It's a fine chance for people who are serious-thinking to get a viewpoint on what other people think about a particular theory or line of behavior and it is especially enlightening to find out what estimate your friends have of you. Maybe it's as well to say that this game should be played in a group where real honesty can be displayed, and where no one is going to be seriously affected by the decision of the group.

I have been interested when playing this game, to do a good bit of watching on the side. Famous people are apt to have a certain character attributed to them because of the kind of parts they play on the stage or the type of books they write. It is only in a small informal situation that real instinctive feelings show themselves.

The game is pointless, of course, unless both the person questioned and the rest of the group answer with their very soundest judgment and tell what they actually believe. I don't intend to make this game sound serious—far from it—for I have had some of my best laughs while playing it. It's a little more thoughtful than some of the others, and maybe by that very token better worth playing.

At any rate, I know that people find it very interesting, and that you'll make no mistake in trying it some night when a group of good friends want to go in for a little self-analysis.

And, just incidentally, coffee and sandwiches are exactly the things for early winter evenings.

THIN BREAD AND BUTTER SANDWICHES

TOASTED ENGLISH MUFFINS

BLACK CURRANT JAM OR MARMALADE

TEA OR COFFEE

OATMEAL WAFERS

BON BONS



YOU know how you are always meeting people who are the "spitting image" of an animal or a bird. A roommate of mine at school once could have doubled for an owl any time.

This game grew out of this likeness of humans to animals, and is very amusing. You can choose some well-known person to describe, if you like, and for the purpose of explaining the game, perhaps it's best to start that way, but you can have lots of fun later by choosing someone known to the entire group.

To start with, you send one person, or two if you like, out of the room. Then the remaining guests choose someone to describe.

For illustrative purposes, let's take Chaplin. The person who is "it" asks questions, going around the circle. He can question as long as he can think of questions, for after he has exhausted them, he has only one guess as to the identity of the person. The questions and answers we used for Chaplin I seem to remember were something like this:

Q. What animal does he remind you of?

A. A penguin.

Q. What kind of an auto?

A. Might be a Ford.

Q. What kind of architecture?

A. A theatre.

Q. What kind of food?

A. A hot dog.

Q. What kind of color scheme?

A. Black and white.

Q. What article of clothing?

A. Shoes.

Q. What kind of house would he choose to live in?

A. One away from people.

Q. What kind of girl would he take to dinner?

A. A young blonde.

Q. What piece on the piano?

A. "Shuffle Off to Buffalo."

You'll be surprised when you get into this game, what remarkable comparisons will occur to you, and as the game goes on, it gets decidedly hilarious, and isn't that just what games should become?

I think this game was first introduced at a Sunday morning breakfast party, and I do remember some very unusual food. There was:

MELON BALLS IN ORANGE JUICE

CEREAL WITH CREAM

SCRAMBLED EGGS

SMALL SAUSAGES

HOT TOAST

POPOVERS

HONEY

COFFEE

Descriptions



Are You Psychic?

I HAD begun to get tired of having smart tricks and practical jokes played on me, and when I discovered this game—simplicity itself, but ever so baffling—you can believe I lost no time in trying it out.

"Believe it or not," as my friend Ripley says, only one person has ever guessed how this trick is worked. I almost hate to give it away, and I advise you when you do play it, to be the magician yourself, with only one accomplice, then don't tell anyone how it's done.

I got Claudette Colbert aside, at a house party we were both attending, took her into my confidence, and then gathered everybody into one room. I told them right away, with an air of great solemnity, that Claudette had great psychic powers—in fact, that she was a mind reader. Claudette leaned back in her chair while I adjusted a blindfold.

Of course, you know how people always receive the statement that someone is a mind reader. Well, our crowd did the usual amount of laughing, scoffing, and giggling, but before long someone said an audible thing. This particular time it was, "All right, show us, then." That was my cue. I immediately raised my hand for silence, and said to Claudette, "Are you psychic?"

Claudette had recognized the voice of the person who spoke so she answered, "Yes." Then I pointed at someone in the group and said, "I point." At another, and repeated, "I point," then at the person who had spoken the audible sentence and whose voice Claudette had recognized. She had her eyes securely blindfolded so she couldn't be accused of peeking, and gave the name of the person at once.

You can well imagine that the scoffers stopped scoffing, and got down to the serious business of wondering how it was done, but as I said, only one person has ever guessed. It's a good house party game, and is very effective when played in a roomful of people.

Just wait with your accomplice until someone in the room says a sentence in a voice that you recognize. Then when you answer "Yes" to her query, "Are you psychic?" showing that you recognize the voice, you are ready to go ahead and do your stuff, much to the amazement of the crowd.

I especially advise you not to give the trick away because people really love to be fooled, and you can keep up this illusion of possessing mysterious powers for a long time to come and to very good advantage.

Claudette heaped honors on herself with her superb delineation of a mystic. She managed to get a very mysterious and intense tone in her voice when she spoke; and I was very much amused at the sudden sobering down of the scoffers, while the trick was going on, and then at the questions that flew thick and fast as to how it was done.

Big crowds are such fun, that I can never resist them. But I've learned some tricks about feeding them on delicacies that are a bit "different" without the necessity for lots of time and bother in preparation. Here is one menu that always is popular:

CANNED TOMATO JUICE

ROAST STUFFED CHICKEN OR DUCK

BEATEN BISCUITS

HOMEMADE JELLY

CLOVER ROLLS

CHOCOLATE CAKE

GINGER ALE

GRAPE JUICE



THERE were just eight of us sitting around one afternoon, much too early to dress for dinner, at just one of those in-between hours. Somebody suggested that wooing the goddess of chance would be fun, but there didn't seem to be any equipment handy except a pair of dice, but by dint of a bit of scrambling we evolved the "Cork Game" and have been having hilarious fun with it ever since

It's brand-new, I'm sure, and can be best played with six or eight people. With eight people playing you'll need fifteen chips or matches for each player, seven corks, each fastened to a yard of stout string, a pair of dice, and a saucepan

The game starts with the seven players seated around a small table. The corks are in the center and each player has a string in his hand. The dealer stands up with the dice in the saucepan, and when everyone is ready, he shakes the dice and rolls them out on the table. Of course, every eye is glued on the dice, and if a seven or an eleven comes up, everyone jerks his cork away. The dealer, however, has his eye out for the seven and eleven, too, and in case either of them comes up, he slaps the saucepan down on the corks trying to catch as many as possible. If he catches your cork, you have to pay him a chip. If you succeed in getting it away, he has to pay you one. If the dealer catches all the corks, each player pays him double

But watch out, for if you get nervous and snatch your cork away on the wrong number, you have to pay the dealer a chip. Each dealer has three chances with the dice, and then the saucepan and position of dealer pass to the person on his left.

It's noisy and loads of fun, and I warn you to put a protective cover of some sort over the table

I've found that it is an especially good game to play out of doors. You know, when everybody has done all the swimming, high diving, tennis playing and other physical acrobatics possible, it's time then to sit around in a circle and match mental dexterity

This game appeals to me particularly because it isn't like any other game of chance, and because the necessary paraphernalia can be gotten together in just no time at all. In fact, I find that people enjoy most, the games they can help prepare or invent. I suppose that is why we are always looking for new ones.

Anyway, for a good round of silly nonsense, which may net you a profit, I suggest "Corks."

When we were all bankrupt, I whisked off chips, cover and all, and the cook brought some hors d'oeuvres in to take their places. Some of these I think are quite unique

GRILLED SARDINES ON TOAST STRIPS

LEMON GARNISH

DEVILED EGGS WITH CAVIAR CENTER

CELERY STUFFED WITH PIMIENTO CHEESE

TINY TOMATOES FILLED WITH CRABMEAT

SALAMI CORNUCOPIAS WITH WATERCRESS GARNISH

Corks



The Murder Game

THE first confession in the Snyder-Gray case given by Mrs. Snyder was a full account of how she and her accomplice, Gray, killed her husband. Later on when she was on trial for her life, with the help of her lawyer, she began to remember all sorts of details. So many, in fact, that even the jury, who hated the idea of sending a woman to the chair, knew she was lying, and brought in a verdict of guilty.

On the way home from the trial, Fanny Hurst and I got into a discussion as to how much people really notice what goes on around them, and I decided to find out. That night, at a dinner we were giving in our home, we played our first game of murder.

I am giving below our first little scenario, and my husband and I—neither of us can act for sour apples—played the two parts.

Characters: A man, his wife, and two maids.

Scene: A living room in a New York apartment. The woman seated in a chair, and the man standing leaning against a table—smoking.

Action: The man offers his wife a cigarette, and gives her a light. The door bell rings. A maid comes in and delivers the following message to the woman.

Maid: "Mr. John Brown wishes to speak to you on the telephone."

Woman: "John Brown? All right, Mary" (the maid's name). Woman leaves room. The man turns to a table, pours himself a drink of water, then picks up an empty glass and throws it on the floor, breaking it. The door bell then rings three times. A second maid enters the room with a plate containing two oranges and an apple, and puts it on the table. She starts to leave the room and the man calls her back and says:

"Take that fruit out, Sadie" (the maid's name).

The woman then re-enters the room.

Man: "Who was it you were talking to?"

Woman: "Robert White."

Man: "Haven't I told you that I don't want you to have anything to do with that Bob White?"

Woman: "Yes, but—etc., etc., etc."

Here follows a domestic scene of great bitterness which culminates by the woman saying:

"Well, I'm going to bed. Turn out the lights when I come."

The woman leaves the room. The man turns out the lights, and in the darkness takes a carving knife, and stabs himself, falling to the floor of the room.

The woman then re-enters the room calling her husband's name, snaps on the lights, and finds him dead. She exclaims: "It can't be so."

Curtain

NOTE: While the woman was out answering the telephone she changed her slippers putting on slippers of an entirely different color, and she keeps these on for the balance of the act. However, at the close of the act, and before the questions are asked, she slips out and changes back to the slippers she had on originally.

When we finished, we gave each guest a paper and pencil (during which interval there were a good many laughs taken at our acting) and we asked the following

1. What was Jack doing when the scene opened?
2. What was Neysa doing?
3. What was Jack's first definite action? (Lighting a cigarette for his wife.)
4. What name did the maid announce as calling on the telephone? (John Brown)
What was the maid's name? (Mary)
5. What did Jack do when Neysa left the room? (Poured himself a drink, and threw a glass on the floor.)
6. What did the broken glass have in it? (Empty)
7. How many times did the bell ring the first time? (Once)
8. How many times did the bell ring the second time? (Three times)
9. What was on the plate the maid brought in? (Two oranges and an apple)
10. Was it the same maid? (No)
11. What was her name? (Sadie)
12. Whom did Neysa say she had been talking to? (Robert White)
13. Was there any change in her costume? (Yes)
14. If so, what? (Slippers)
15. What were the last words Neysa said to Jack?
16. What did he say in reply? (Nothing)
17. What position was the body lying in?
18. Which way was the head pointing?
19. What was the instrument of death?
20. Had he anything in his hand? If so, what? (He had dropped the knife but had a handkerchief clutched in his right hand)
21. Which hand?
22. What did Neysa say when she saw the body? ("It can't be so!")
23. What color slippers did Neysa have on when she discovered the body?

You get +1 for every correct answer. The best score was 11. Not one person in the room noticed that I had changed my slippers.

Beatrice Lillie had a score of 4 and I think it was only by peeking over her neighbor's shoulder that she got that. In any case every one had had an exciting time and wanted to play another one right away—which is not possible as the murder game requires more preparation than any game I know. For example, later on, when it was played at Lady Ribblesdale's house in England—with the Duke of Marlborough, the murderer, it took two weeks to prepare

However, it is worth it. The following is a scenario we used a little later, that I wrote in about fifteen minutes. Lord Jeffrey Amherst played the villain and among the audience was Ruth Chatterton, Ralph Forbes, Lynn Fontaine, Alfred Lunt, Noel Coward and Helen Hayes. We rehearsed it the afternoon of the party, and ridiculous as our acting must have seemed to such magnificent actors, they gave us their rapt attention, and all of them got very bad scores

We preferred to believe, of course, that they were stunned by our fine acting, but after playing the game a good many times, I have concluded that it proves how very little we see of what actually goes on around us; and also, how impossible it would be for most of us to be accurate reporters



CAST

Jeff The Crook
 Delia
 Miss Carter

Jeff is playing the piano—Delia is reading the news paper. Delia, pretending to read

Delia: "Listen Jeff, this will interest you, 'WANTED BY THE POLICE \$1000 Reward for information leading to the capture of Jeff White, alias "Black" alias "The Dude." Last seen in Buffalo January 25, 1934.' That's an awful easy way to make a grand (Lights a cigarette.) "And if you want to keep out of trouble, lay off that Carter girl too—I don't like it."

Jeff: "Haven't seen the girl in a month

Delia: "Well, see that you don't." (Puts on her hat)
 "I'm off for a little shopping

Jeff: "See that it isn't shop-lifting, my light-fingered friend

Delia: "Mind your own business" (Exits)
 Knock at the door. Jeff goes to door
 Enter Miss Carter

He: "I told you not to come here

She: "I had to see you

He: "I told you not to come here, of all places

She: "I tell you I *had* to see you. I want to get my letters." (Explains that she is going to marry Tom Butterworth.)

He: "He's a rich young man, isn't he? What would he do if he heard a letter like this?" (Reads love letter) "Well, I'm a poor young man." (Tells her he will give her the letters back but will have to have a present.)

She: "You aren't trying to blackmail me"

He: "No, but a man has to live." (Tells her she can have them all for \$25,000.)

She: (Aghast) "I don't know where I'd ever get \$25,000." (She then gives him her pearls and he gives her the letters which she counts.) "But you haven't given me the one I want, you this morning

He: "I didn't receive any this morning."

She: "You can't be as rotten as that—you know you got a letter from me this morning

He: "I tell you, I did not

I feel rather faint—May I have a drink?

He goes out of the room and returns with bottle of

whisky. He opens the bottle and says "Oh, I've forgotten

the key." (Goes out of room again

She opens one of her packages which contains food-alcohol) and pours it into the glass of whisky which he had poured out for himself. She then slips

He comes in, drinks his whisky, and dies

She runs to the door and listens. Goes back to Jeff's body and gets letter and pearls, but leaves her gloves on the chair. (Exits) The audience is then told to come up and look things over. Then each one is given a paper and pencil. And the following questions are asked:



Questions

1. What tune was he playing when action opened?
2. What amount was agreed upon as the price for the letters?
3. What crime was Jeff wanted for?
4. What did Alice Carter leave behind?
5. Where was Jeff last seen by the police?
6. In what town did the action take place?
7. What day was it? What time?
8. Name one alias
9. Whom did Miss Carter say she was going to marry?
10. How long had Jeff and Miss Carter known each other?
(Date they met given in letter)
11. Did Jeff know he was murdered?
12. From what pocket did Miss Carter take the pearls?
13. What voice was last heard? What was said?
14. How many letters did he return?
15. What did Miss Carter take off Jeff's body?
16. What was the last thing Jeff said?
17. What color hat did Delia put on?

List of Props for Second Scenario

Try to get an out-of-town newspaper

Clock in room set at certain hour

A fake label of "Wood Alcohol" on any bottle

Letters.

Letter read by Jeff

"Darling

You seem to be avoiding me lately. I must see you. You've made me so unhappy. That girl who gave the New Year's party, where I met you, told me I looked dreadfully. I guess you are breaking my heart. Please, please see me."

This game has swept the country and has been played with many variations, among them District Attorney, and Murder in the Dark, which I developed, but I think no variation is as exciting as the original game. You will need a bit of time to prepare your story, and maybe one short rehearsal. Attention to the details will give it a great deal of force, and you'll be as amazed as I was, at the things that people don't see. If it is hard to think of plots, just read the latest newspaper, or some popular fiction and you will have the basis for a grand scenario. The plot should be kept simple, however, for it is attention to small details which is of paramount importance. We played this first after a formal dinner, and the excitement of the game quite overshadowed food, but I had planned it with special care and I think it included:

JULIENNE SOUP

MELBA TOAST

ROAST DUCK, ORANGE SAUCE

PEA TIMBALES, MUSHROOM SAUTE

BROWN RICE

GRAPEFRUIT AND FRENCH ENDIVE SALAD

MAPLE MOUSSE

COFFEE

NUTS

MINTS

Notes

I STARTED one night not so long ago in my studio Irving Berlin was playing the piano. When he had finished I told him that I was going to act something written by him and see if he'd recognize it

A McCall cover was on the easel and I went up to it and said: "I'm just crazy about you, my dear—I think you are one of the nicest people I ever met—I adore your looks." Irving guessed it immediately as an old song hit of his—"The Girl I Love Is On A Magazine Cover." He then announced he would do one for me

Taking a woman by the hand, he turned to her and said, "Stay where you are—Do you see anything in this room? Sh-h-h! Do you hear anything?" The answer was a musical comedy of some years ago called Stop, Look, and Listen."

By this time everyone in the room had ideas. A visiting Englishman stood in the center of the studio and announced he had a lot of things to sell. A well-known book was the answer: "British Agent."

Then Hope Williams and Rosamond Pinchot disappeared for a moment and returning walked around the room each wearing a piece of paper pinned to the back of her dress. On one was printed PARIS, and on the other LONDON. They hinted they were a well-known English classic; and it wasn't long before someone guessed—"The Tale of Two Cities."

We did "Time To Retire," "Good To The Last Drop," "Manslaughter," "Little Man, What Now,"

After Such Pleasures," "American Beauty," "So Big." But my favorite was finally done by Irving who went around the room with five others saying to everyone

"Do you write?" "Did you ever try to write?" Over and over again. The answer was a play that ran in New York for a long time: "Six Characters In Search Of An Author." There is no getting away from the fact that, as a party, people would rather be participants than audience. That's why it is always desirable in any game to get as many people playing as possible. I've discovered, furthermore, that everybody likes to act. So games such as this one are particularly good, for giving a chance to do that

You'll be as surprised as I have been on many occasions to see what ability your friends have been concealing, not alone in acting, but in thinking up clever titles to present. The range of subjects is unlimited, and you'll agree after a few tries at this game, that the modern mode in advertising, fiction, movies and entertainment contains dramatic action.

In this day of best sellers, advertising slogans, and movies, this is a game that any group can play at the drop of a hat, and, best of all, it requires no preparation of food. It's been played at parties ever since we first started it, and I'll guarantee it to rescue any dull evening. It gets everyone moving about and in such an hilarious mood that a "Help Yourself" supper is a good idea. This is one of my quick favorites:

TOMATO BAREBIT

CRISP CRACKERS

MUFFINS

CONSERVE

FAM PUFFS FILLED WITH ICE CREAM,

CHOCOLATE SAUCE

COFFEE

I WAS at a beach party, I think, that we first played this game. Swimming and beach games had us pretty well worn down and we were ready for something quiet. This game has the added virtue of being lots of fun, and one that everybody can take a hand in.

We sent Amelia Earhart off out of earshot, then sat about deciding upon a character for her. It had to be someone famous in history or fiction, but well known. We finally settled upon Cinderella. Amelia came back, and asked each person in turn the same question, "Who am I?" and the person questioned attempted to give actual information without revealing the character. Some of the questions and answers went like this when Amelia came back.

1st: "You were ill-treated by your family" (cruel stepmother)

2nd: "A person with unusual powers came to your aid." (godmother)

3rd: "You went to a great ball."

4th: "You had very small feet."

5th: "You witnessed a great transformation (Fairy Godmother changed the mice into coachmen.)"

It is allowed three guesses and by this time Amelia thought she knew who she was, so she guessed "Tribby." We told her she was wrong and went on with our answers.

6th: "You wore very unusual footgear." (glass slippers)

7th: "You forgot to watch the clock one night (She was supposed to leave the ball at 12.)"

8th: "You married a Prince."

Then she guessed "Cinderella" and won.

Next we sent Edna Ferber off, and we chose Eve for her. When she asked "Who am I?" the first person answered

"You were one of the first families," and Edna guessed at once.

You can vary the range of your subjects. Some personalities that lend themselves well to this game are

Marie Antoinette

Henry VIII

Mary Stuart

Pocahontas

Santa Claus

Von Hindenberg

This game, we discovered, can be played indefinitely, for each character brings amusing new answers; and it certainly is grand for resting after strenuous beach exercise.

Of course we built a fire and cooked out-of-doors with appetites sharpened by physical and mental efforts. I can still remember how good that supper seemed. We had.

HAMBURGER STEAK SANDWICHES

BERMUDA ONIONS

ROASTED POTATOES

WHOLE TOMATOES

PICKLES

ORANGES

BANANAS

BUTTERSCOTCH BUNS

COFFEE

COCOA

Who am I?



Scavenger Hunt

NO MORE hilarious party is possible, I'm convinced, than a Scavenger Hunt. The game was invented, you know, by Eli Maxwell, and first played in Paris where it turned the town upside-down. It spread quickly to Vienna, London, Rome and Cairo.

Mrs. Hearst asked me to arrange one for her, and it was the first one given in this country. Of course, we were a bit handicapped by that fact that it was February. I can imagine that the game would go much better in summer when you could do your hunting without freezing to death, but despite the weather, I've never laughed so much in my life as I did when the hunters returned with their loot.

As the guests arrived at Mrs. Hearst's party, I divided them in pairs or small groups, gave them a list of objects, and told them that they would have an hour (or in hour and a half, depending on the dimensions of your list) in which to get them. I gave each group a market basket and my blessing, and off they went. At the end of the hour the exhibits were put in a circle in a great front hall in Mrs. Hearst's country home. There were cats, gollish, lobsters, crabs, climaxed by C. V. Whitney who rode into the hall on a big white horse. There were tiny American flags and one so big brought by one of the Hearst boys that it took three men to carry it. Some people who had put blonde hairs in matchboxes for safekeeping lost them, and Sonny Whitney's horse ate up the hay that someone else had taken so much trouble to get.

Here is a sample list

1. Three needles threaded with green silk
2. A bible
3. A phonograph record of "I Remember, Dear."
4. Pair of black stockings
5. Head of cabbage
6. Chicken feather
7. A stone weighing over half a pound and less than a pound
8. An old-fashioned nightshirt
9. Yesterday's newspaper
10. A sprig of lilac
11. The funniest picture you could find
12. Picture of an author
13. A bathing suit
14. Any live animal, except a dog
15. A blonde hair
16. A piece of hay
17. A woman's round garter
18. A used street car, or RR car ticket
19. A pair of pink silk panties
20. A lily cup
21. A library card
22. A used stub pen point
23. An oil lamp
24. A pair of brown rubbers
25. A padlock and key
26. A pair of love birds
27. A mushroom
28. A plume
29. A dill pickle
30. A picture of yourself
31. A piece of homemade cake
32. A spool of lavender thread
33. A calling card (not your own)

34. A telegram
35. A pair of black cotton gloves
36. An autograph book
37. A slice of whole wheat toast
38. A used picture postcard
39. A yard of pink baby ribbon
40. A side comb
41. A square of mosquito netting
42. One of the Elsie Dinsmore books
43. A tintype
44. A necktie clip
45. A bandanna

The joy of this game is that it is active, adventurous and fast moving. Everybody will be intrigued by it whether you have a very simple Hunt with few objects which are sought for on foot, or whether you make it elaborate and send couples off in speedy cars with a formidable number of things that must be obtained.

It takes some time, of course, for couples to figure out the most strategic way to go about gathering their loot. Very devious means will be resorted to, and hilarity will run high.

Almost as much fun as the hunt itself will be the stories told when the hunters return. Very thrilling tales will come forth and some dark secrets will be revealed, you may be sure. It's rather fun, I think to settle down around the fire when the hunt is over and let each couple relate the most exciting moment of the hunt. Sometimes it is fun to give each couple a separate list, and the objects you choose will depend, of course, on where you live and the facilities at hand.

There really ought to be some rules about the disposal of loot at the end of the hunt. I knew one hapless hostess who was left with a bedraggled pair of swans when the guests finally left. At least it is something to think about when you are making out your list.

This game has become tremendously popular all over the world and continues to be a favorite, mainly, I think, because with different lists and a slight change of locale, it can be played over and over without becoming tiresome.

This is a way to give a party on a grand scale without spending any money. It's all a matter of planning and management. Invitations are simple enough. Just say:

Please come to my
SCAVENGER HUNT

at
Nine o'clock Tuesday

Most of them will be obsessed by curiosity to know what it's all about, and will be there promptly on time.

It's amazing how many objects will be obtained even in a couple of hours, and, of course, the judges, who check the objects as each couple returns, award the high prize to the couple bringing home the largest number of objects. You can imagine what appetites are like after a scavenger hunt, so I warn you, that you'd better have something in the line of a banquet.

CLAM SOUP WITH CROUTONS

ASSORTED COLD CUTS

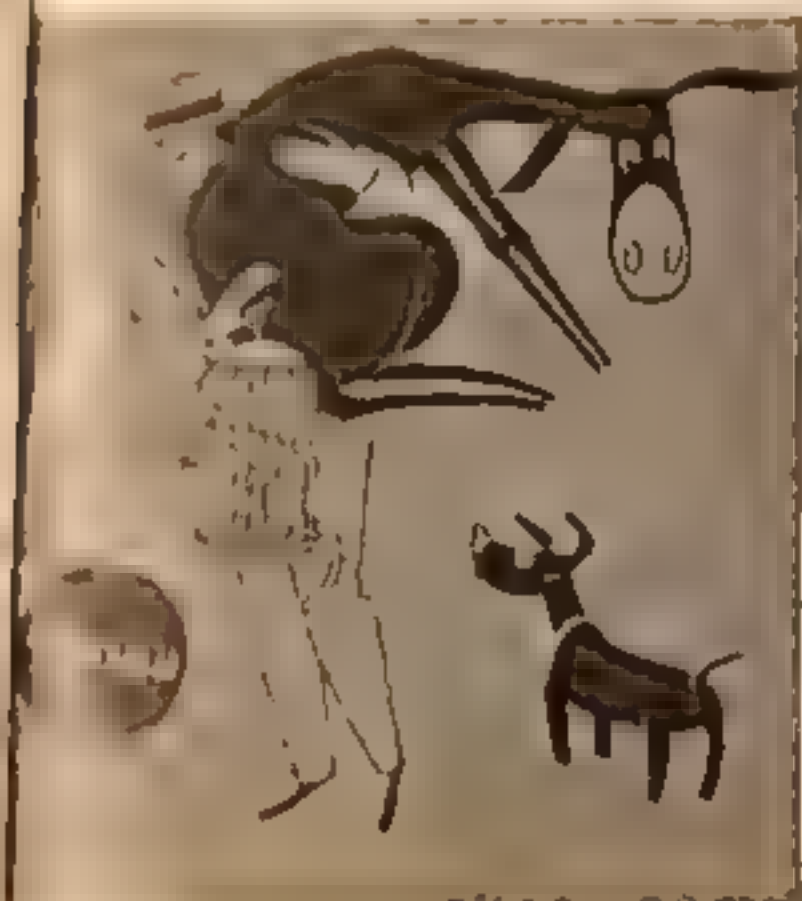
TOMATO RABBIT

STUFFED CELERY

ROLLS

HOT RICE PATTIES WITH MELTED MAPLE SUGAR

COFFEE



Smelling Game

WE GOT into a big discussion one night as to how interdependent our senses were. Somebody said that your sense of smell depended upon your sense of sight—someone else said, "nonsense,"—so what was to do but test it out. For, after all, in this game, there is no argument—you either recognize a smell—or you don't. It all started as a theory, but it became a game that has been used successfully lots of times since.

It probably hasn't occurred to you—it never had to me—that any concentration was necessary to identify odors.

You'll change your mind just as soon as you try it blindfolded. Just goes to show, doesn't it, how we are apt to rely on our eyes for everything. This game is special fun because no one thinks it amounts to anything before you begin. "Of course I know all the ordinary smells," they are apt to jeer.

But just wait, you'll have your innings, and afford your guests loads of fun too, when they try these perfectly familiar things.

It's better to prepare ahead of your party. Have containers all alike—small glasses do very well or butter tins. Keep the containers out of sight until all the blindfolds are arranged. The only two not blindfolded are the one carrying the containers, and the person who keeps score of each player. Number the containers, and the score pad to match. Then hold the containers one after the other under the nose of a player and let him guess what it is. It's surprising how few get it right—I know three people in one room who thought that bananas were violets. Here is a suggested list that I have used—you'll probably think of many things to add to it.

- 1. A bunch of bananas
- 2. Some kitchen soap
- 3. A piece of soap
- 4. A ceranium leaf
- 5. Some lan
- 6. Spoonful of Listerine
- 7. Some clover (or grass)
- 8. A piece of paper
- 9. Turpentine
- 10. Rubbing alcohol
- 11. Tobacco
- 12. Tea
- 13. Coffee

This is one of my favorite Sunday night games, and Sunday night supper is an institution with me. I often serve

1. CREAM OF CELERY SOUP
2. COLD MOCK DUCK (VEAL LOAF)
3. MACARONI AU GRATIN
4. BAKING POWDER BISCUITS

UTENSILS	OLIVES	PICKLES
	POACHED PEACHES	
	COCONUT LAYER CAKE	
TEA		COFFEE

I THINK there always comes the time in any good party when people are just plain tired of talking. I realized that one of these potent silences had come over a party of mine one night, so I bethought me of a new adaptation of an old favorite—"Hot and cold."

Harpo Marx was there—and so with "Pinchey Winchey" still rankling in my soul, I sent him out of the room first and I explained what I thought was a good revenge to the rest of the group. I had every intention of showing Harpo up if I could. The idea was this. The entire group decided upon a series of actions, not necessarily related to each other. The player who had been sent out of the room was to be given no clue and no help at all, other than the tapping of the fingertips of one person in the room who knew what was expected of him.

That was going to keep Harpo out of mischief for awhile I decided.

The player in the room begins tapping very softly when the second player comes in. He increases his tapping when "It" is near the object desired, or when he is about to perform the action demanded. When the first thing in the series is accomplished, the tapping becomes very soft again, and begins building up for the second action.

Of course, for the general amusement of the crowd you want to include funny things in your sequences. There can be dances, piano presentations, political speeches and vocal solos wangled from the hapless victims. This is one game, I can give personal assurance, where it is fun to be audience.

Maybe I didn't have fun watching Harpo perform. I must say, for all his agility, he was a little bit like a sleepwalker.

You can make up especially appropriate or humorous series of actions for various people. After all, the point of this game is not only to engage in a battle of wits with "it," but to provide some amusement for yourselves. It works like a charm.

We decided that he was to perform a series of actions—come into the room, walk over to the piano, play a tune, get up, take a rose from the vase on the piano, and sit in the middle of the floor with it in his mouth.

As soon as Harpo entered the room one person began tapping with his fingertips softly, till Harpo went toward the piano; the tapper increased his volume when Harpo did what we wanted him to. When one action was accomplished the tapping became soft until he approached the next object, and so on until he finished.

I've been amazed every time I played the game to see what complicated things people could be made to do without a single word being spoken.

This was an unexpected party, so when pangs of hunger began to assert themselves we just hied to the kitchen and helped ourselves and each other. This is easy to make and everyone can help:

FRIZZLED BEEF WITH BUTTERED NOODLES

Waffles

COFFEE

Tapping



Corpus Delicti

ALEXANDER WOOLLCOTT can never leave any game alone, and it was just a little while after we had played the Murder Game that he happened to be a fellow guest at a week-end party. He sprung this variation of the original game on us, and afforded us a very exciting few hours.

He gathered us all together in a room. A table in the center held as many playing cards as there were guests. They were lying face down and among them was the Ace of Spades. We were each told by Mr. Woolcott, who had appointed himself District Attorney, to draw a card. The person who drew the Ace of Spades was the Murderer.

The holder of the Ace of Spades is given a certain length of time in which to commit his crime. It may be from one hour to twenty-four. His objective, of course, is to cover himself, if possible, by an alibi, so that he can't be detected. When he finally thinks he has found an opportune time, he goes up to the victim, and says, "You're the one." Thereupon the victim must lie down wherever he is and stay there until someone finds him and reports the murder.

It's a good idea, incidentally, to tell your cook or maid that you are playing this game, so that the chance discovery of a victim won't scare her to death. Besides, if the maid discovers the victim, she should at once notify one of the guests.

When the victim is discovered all the guests are immediately assembled and must tell the absolute truth except, of course, the murderer. The corpse is allowed to tell the *time* of the crime only. The District Attorney then starts checking up on the alibis. The questioning, of course, is very exciting, and the checking up of alibis is quite breathtaking.

At the original playing Mr. Woolcott finally fastened a suspicious eye on one of the women guests. She affirmed that she was taking a bath at the time the crime was committed. Nothing daunted Mr. Woolcott. He sent for the maid, and demanded the lady's bath mat. Murder will out—the mat was dry! The lady had *not* taken a bath that morning, and so she was found out. Of course Mr. Woolcott made a masterful District Attorney; but you will be impressed when you play this game by the way in which discrepancies in alibis will creep out. The trick is to seize upon these small discrepancies, until you eventually narrow the investigation down to the people who have the murder time unaccounted for; who have nothing to support their alibi, other than their own report.

This is an exciting way to occupy an evening, for it lends an air of mystery and eerie expectancy even while you are dancing, playing bridge, or singing around the piano. A note of cheer and heartiness can well be injected after the discovery of the murderer, so why not have a sandwich bar, with amusing concoctions, and set everyone to "making his own." Here are some combinations:

LOAF OF WHITE AND WHOLE WHEAT BREAD
SOFTENED BUTTER SPREAD
POTTED HAM OR TONGUE
COTTAGE OR CREAM CHEESE
JELLY OR JAM
SHRIMP SALAD SPREAD
CHOPPED EGG AND ANCHOVY SPREAD

ISSUED BY McCALL'S MAGAZINE